

NORTH YORKSHIRE CHILDREN'S TRUST BOARD

20 JULY 2009

**Implementation of ContactPoint in North Yorkshire:  
Progress Report**

**1.0 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To update the Board on the implementation in North Yorkshire of the national ContactPoint system

**2.0 Background**

- 2.1 Section 12 of the Children Act 2004 provides the legal basis and operating framework for a child index or directory, now known as ContactPoint. The purpose of ContactPoint is to help practitioners to quickly and easily identify whether other agencies are working with a child. This should facilitate improved information sharing between practitioners and agencies and deliver better co-ordinated support for children and young people. ContactPoint has potential to deliver substantially more efficient working practices. Government estimates suggest that a fully operational system could save at least five million practitioner hours a year.
- 2.2 The government considers ContactPoint to be a key tool in supporting the safeguarding, health and well-being of all children and young people in England. ContactPoint is an important element of the Every Child Matters ambition to create integrated children's services which support early intervention and preventative approaches. This ambition is reiterated in the government's Children's Plan and is embedded within the North Yorkshire Children and Young People's Plan.
- 2.3 ContactPoint is one of a suite of tools that is being introduced nationally to help practitioners deliver effective joint working with partners. ContactPoint thus complements and has important links with other initiatives such as the Common Assessment Framework, improved Information Sharing Arrangements, and the development of the Children's Services Directory.

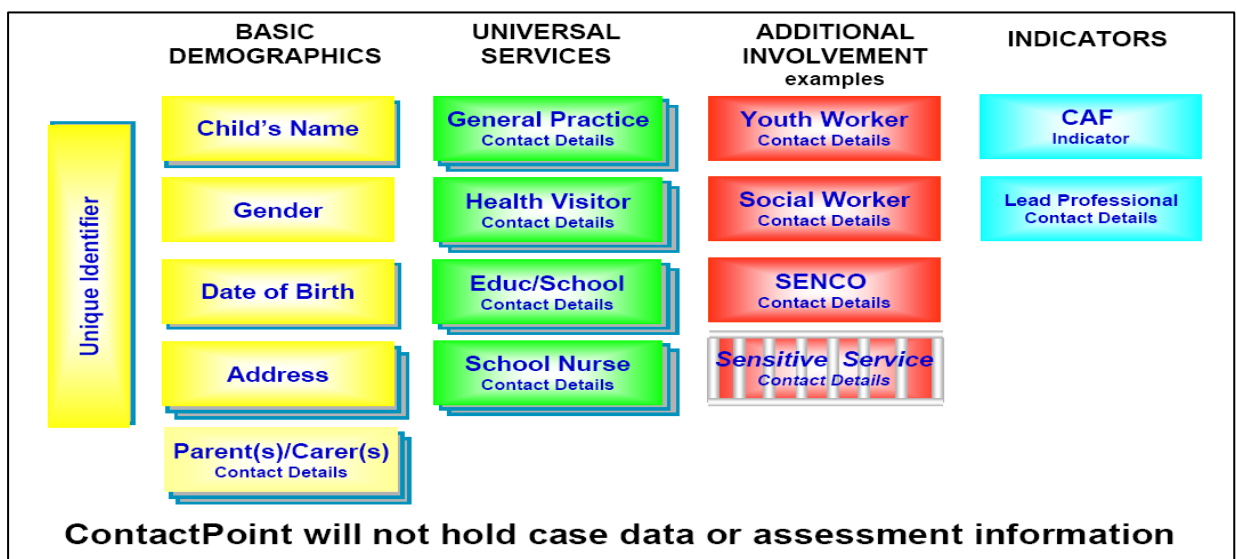
### 3.0 Information held on ContactPoint

3.1 ContactPoint is an information directory. It is not a case management system. The Children Act 2004 and supporting regulations prohibit the inclusion of any case information on the system. ContactPoint will hold basic information on all children and young people aged 0-18 years. It will also hold information on those aged up to 25 years for certain groups of consenting 'participating young people' such as care leavers and young people with complex disabilities.

3.2 The following information will be held on ContactPoint:

- Name, address, gender, date of birth and an identifying number for all children in England
- Name and contact details for:
  - parents/carers
  - school or educational setting
  - primary medical practitioner (e.g. GP/ health visitor/ school nurse)
  - additional services working with the child.
- An indicator to show whether a practitioner is the lead professional for a child and/or whether they have completed an assessment under the Common Assessment Framework (CAF).
- An indicator to show whether the child is receiving support from so-called 'sensitive services' (defined as sexual health, mental health and substance abuse). Explicit consent will be required to record the contact details of these services.

3.3 The following diagram illustrates the information that will be available on ContactPoint:



- 3.4 The information to be held on ContactPoint is sensitive and so the security of the system is extremely important. Comprehensive arrangements are in place to prevent inappropriate access to the information on the system and ongoing security will remain a priority at all times. Access to ContactPoint is restricted to persons who fulfil the statutory conditions set out in the Children Act 2004 Information Database (England) Regulations 2007 (the Regulations). All users of ContactPoint must demonstrate that they:
- need access to the system for part or all of their work
  - have completed accredited ContactPoint training
  - have undertaken any other training which the local authority or national partner considers appropriate
  - have an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) disclosure (or equivalent) which is less than three years old.
- 3.5 Every access to every ContactPoint record will be recorded in an audit trail which will be regularly reviewed. Suspected misuse of ContactPoint will result in an investigation. This may lead to action taken under criminal law, and can result in a fine or imprisonment.
- 3.6 The information held in ContactPoint records will be sourced by linking existing systems to ContactPoint. Nationally, child information will be provided from the DCSF, the Department of Health, the Department for Work and Pensions, the Home Office, the Office for National Statistics, the Ministry of Justice, the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCSA), and three national voluntary organisations, namely, Barnardos, NSPCC, and the Children's Society.
- 3.7 When the system is fully operational, the following local services will be expected to link their systems to ContactPoint: education (including Independent Schools, non-maintained Special Schools and FE Colleges), children's social care, health (PCT, acute trusts, and mental health trusts, early years providers, Connexions, police, and fire and rescue. Additional local services may link to ContactPoint but are not required to do so. These include registered social landlords, local authority housing departments, and local voluntary and community organisations
- 4.0 Management of ContactPoint**
- 4.1 The ContactPoint project is managed by a combination of national and local implementation teams. The national implementation team, established by the DSCF, is responsible for the overall project management, ICT development, and technical security of the system.
- 4.2 Each top-tier local authority area has a local implementation team. The North Yorkshire implementation team draws on staff from the Integrated Processes section of the CYPS Performance and Outcomes team. There are also close links with the CYPS Systems Support team and the Children and Young People Strategic Workforce Development Group (CSWD).

- 4.3 The county council has a statutory responsibility to establish a ContactPoint Management Team. This team, which is comprised of staff within the CYPS Systems Support team, will manage the day-to-day operation of the system and be responsible for the North Yorkshire 'section' of ContactPoint. The content of the North Yorkshire 'section' is defined as the records for all children and young people ordinarily resident in North Yorkshire.
- 4.4 Specific statutory responsibilities of the ContactPoint management team include working with partners to:
- Ensure each organisation is able to achieve and remain compliant with the ContactPoint 'Organisational Accreditation' conditions
  - Ensure all relevant local systems can link to ContactPoint
  - Operate the ContactPoint 'Shielding' function within North Yorkshire
  - Manage child records for children normally resident in North Yorkshire and ensure good data quality
  - Identify, authorise and train ContactPoint users
  - Monitor, audit and investigate use of ContactPoint by local users
  - Manage and ensure the security of ContactPoint within North Yorkshire
  - Ensure all users have enhanced CRB checks
  - Produce local statistics to support service planning
  - Communicate and promote ContactPoint to all relevant stakeholders
  - Manage the complaints processes in relation to ContactPoint

## **5.0 Timeframe for Implementation**

- 5.1 The first delivery phase for ContactPoint commenced in January 2009. This involved training a small number of vetted staff in every local authority to undertake critical shielding work.
- 5.2 In terms of implementation, North Yorkshire has been allocated a place in deployment slot two, which means the management team is due to gain access to the national ContactPoint system during summer 2009.
- 5.3 During late 2009 and early 2010 roll-out of ContactPoint to practitioner users will begin. A phased approach is being adopted for ContactPoint implementation in North Yorkshire. Current estimates indicate that it will take approximately two years to roll out ContactPoint to all identified users.

## **6.0 Current Progress**

- 6.1 Local implementation of ContactPoint is managed through a ContactPoint project plan and risk register. Monthly highlights reports are submitted to DCSF to track progress. Progress in North Yorkshire is currently rated 'green' and has consistently been so throughout the life of the project. This green rating indicates that North Yorkshire is on target to implement ContactPoint in accordance with the national project timescales and requirements.

6.2 To date the following key project milestones have been achieved in North Yorkshire:

- The completion of a partnership-wide workforce analysis to scope and understand which roles will be 'users' of ContactPoint, their training requirements and whether they currently have the relevant security clearance required (e.g. enhanced CRB checks/ secure IT access etc.)
- The development of a ContactPoint training strategy, agreed through the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership Workforce Development Group.
- The development of partnership-wide integrated working induction e-learning package and information sharing e-learning package with the Children and Young People Strategic Workforce Development Group (CSWD) which will form level one of ContactPoint training.
- The identification of those systems that will be required to link to ContactPoint, assessing their data quality and their ability to integrate with the ContactPoint system.
- The development of a ContactPoint communications strategy and action plan.
- The completion of 'organisational accreditation' for the North Yorkshire ContactPoint Team.
- The adoption and operation of the North Yorkshire ContactPoint shielding policy, developed and agreed by a multi-agency shielding group.

## **7.0 Organisational Accreditation**

7.1 Any organisation that wishes to use ContactPoint or supply data to the system must first achieve organisational accreditation. This assures that any organisation involved in ContactPoint has established acceptable policies and processes covering the use of ContactPoint and are subject to appropriate supervision, monitoring and controls.

7.2 The DCSF has issued a set of 28 conditions that must be met before organisational accreditation is achieved. For instance, those organisations which seek accreditation must:

- put in place sufficient internal audit, control and human resources functions
- be aware of the requirements and conditions set out in the regulations, the ContactPoint statutory guidance and accreditation documents
- have in place processes to conduct compliance checks, take action and report/record outcomes
- show evidence of audit planning, inspection and follow-up action
- nominate an individual or post responsible for ensuring these conditions are met.

- 7.2 The North Yorkshire ContactPoint Management Team is working closely with partner organisations help them meet the conditions of organisational accreditation. The management team also has responsibility to monitor each accredited organisation on an on-going basis, to ensure that these policies and procedures are being applied. In addition, the multi-agency ContactPoint Data Group supports organisations throughout the accreditation process.

## **8.0 Training**

- 8.1 The ContactPoint training strategy identifies the need to train a wide range of stakeholders. The most recent workforce analysis forecasts that in North Yorkshire approximately 3400 practitioners will require ContactPoint training. Each stakeholder group will have various levels of training dependent on whether they are direct users, practitioners relying on members of staff to use ContactPoint effectively, or interested parties who need to understand what ContactPoint is and how it is used.
- 8.2 It is expected that ContactPoint training for practitioners in North Yorkshire will commence during November 2009. Thereafter, ContactPoint training is expected to accelerate during the first half of 2010 and continue into 2011. The main ContactPoint training will be delivered as one part of a multi-agency integrated working training package developed by a sub-group of the CSWD, proposals for which were agreed by the Board in May 2009. The other elements of this training programme are safeguarding, the Common Assessment Framework, and information sharing. This training will be procured from external providers, and a ContactPoint training specifications paper has been developed to inform the tendering process for this.
- 8.3 The Board's agreement will be sought concerning the costs of delivering the multi-agency integrated working training programme. As outlined in the proposals agreed by the Board in May 2009, it is likely that partners will be requested to make financial contributions towards the costs of delivering this training. This is consistent with a decision made by the Board in July 2007 which stated that those partner organisations whose staff will require ContactPoint training would contribute financially towards meeting the costs.

## **9.0 Media Coverage & Public Communications**

- 9.1 A national communications team provides a range of support and guidance to assist delivery partners with media management and associated activities. A public relations team and helpline, and the DCSF press office, are available to offer advice on handling any media issue relating to ContactPoint.
- 9.2 The local media is being used proactively to enhance public understanding of ContactPoint. The key points at which the public are likely to come across ContactPoint are through the receipt of Fair Processing Notices issued to parents by schools, through interaction with services, and through media coverage.

- 9.3 Links have been established with the county council's corporate communications unit and the customer service centre. These teams are fully briefed about possible media coverage and are equipped to respond appropriately to direct enquiries from the general public and the press. The county council website has up-to-date and accessible information regarding ContactPoint.
- 9.4 Communication with stakeholders is maintained through the 'Integrated Processes Update' newsletter, distributed both electronically and in paper form to practitioners across the partnership. This tool provides regular updates on the ContactPoint project and addresses negative press coverage of ContactPoint by providing clear and factual responses.

## **10.0 Recommendations**

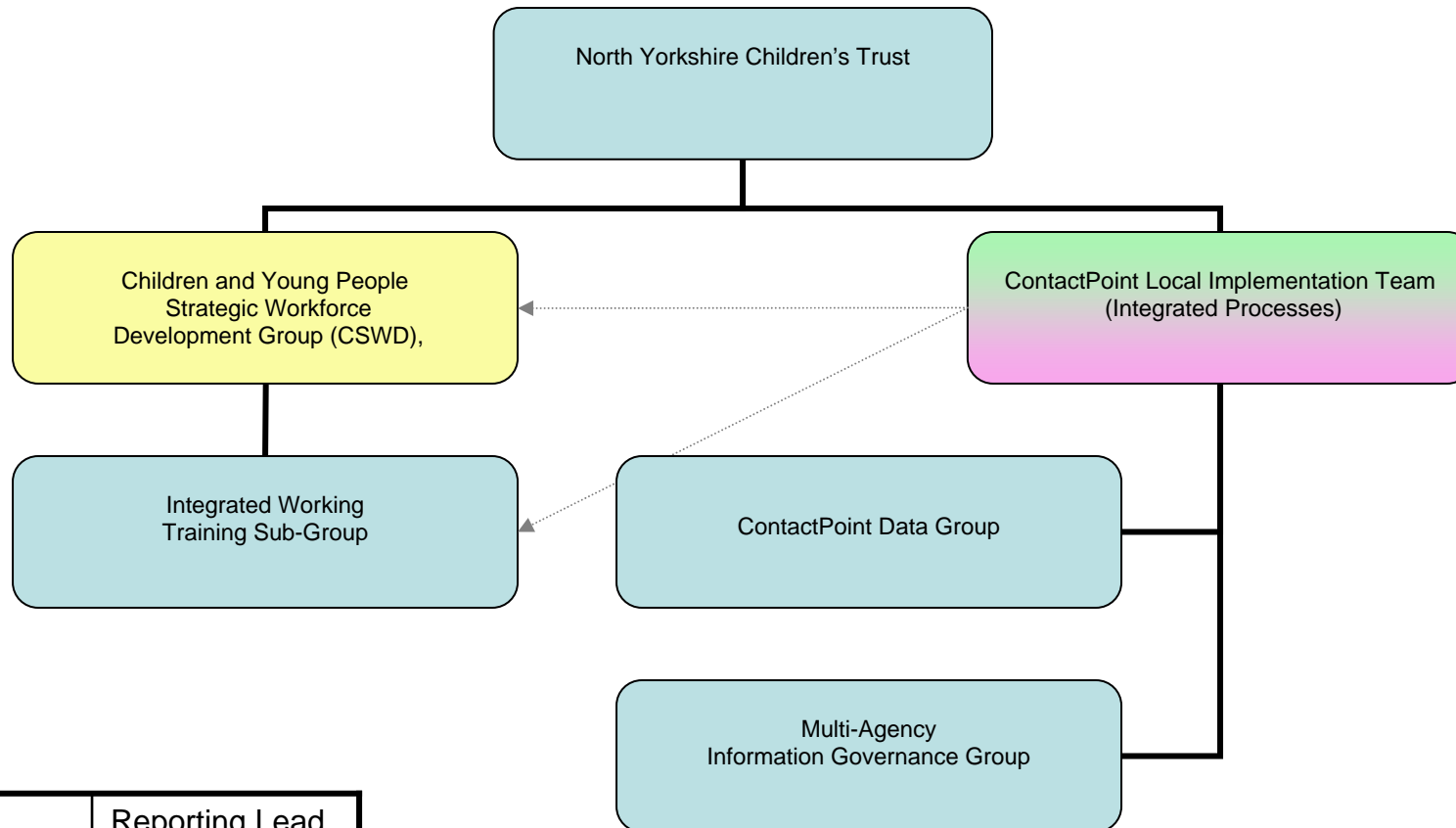
- 10.1 That the Board notes the progress of ContactPoint implementation in North Yorkshire.

Please direct any comments or questions about this report to:

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**Appendix A: ContactPoint Local Implementation Team Reporting Structure**



	Reporting Lead
	Training for Integrated Working
	ContactPoint
	Information Sharing

